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A STUDY  
By J. W. Alexander



# BRUSH AND PENCIL

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## THE EIGHTIETH EXHIBITION OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN

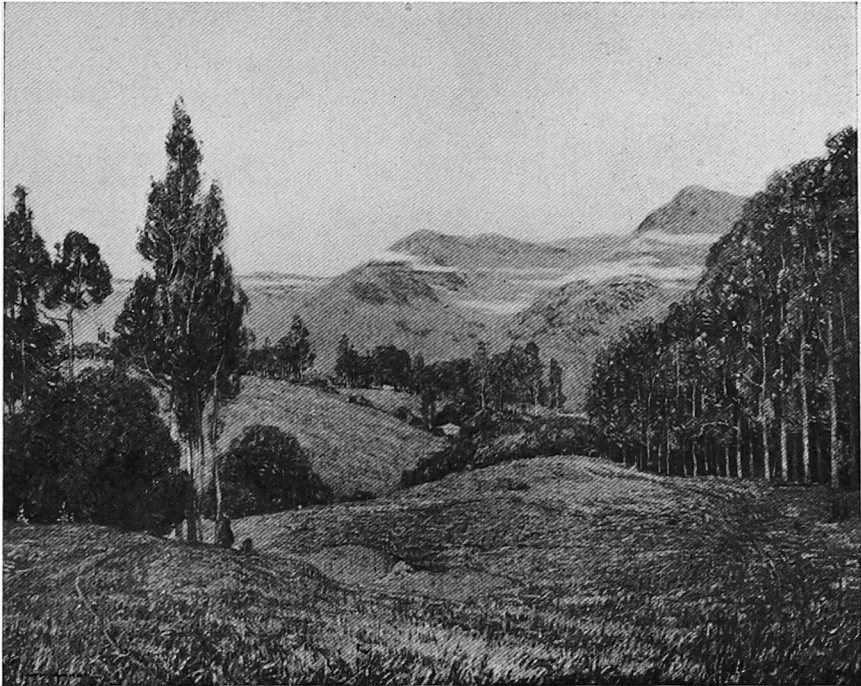
The eightieth annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design, following so closely after the superb Comparative Exhibition of Native and Foreign Art, held in the same galleries, suffered, perhaps—and that unjustly—by comparison. Had the two exhibitions, however, been held simultaneously in adjoining galleries, comparison would have been more odious than instructive. The one was eclectic rather than representative—an acknowledged attempt to select and show two hundred masterpieces covering a long period of effort; the other was simply what has happily been termed a “news exhibition”—one composed of voluntary contributions, and designed to show the achievements, the progress, the retrogression, the changes, or evolutions of a twelve-months. The one drew its treasures mainly from the private galleries of the wealthy, whose means permitted the gratification of a cultured taste; the other from the studios of the workers. If one looked in the Academy’s exhibition for the average quality displayed



PREPARING FOR THE FÊTE  
By Pauline Dohn Rudolph

by its august predecessor, he would have been disappointed—it was not there. If, on the other hand, he looked upon it as the year's record of an organization of artists and its invited contributors, the show was replete with interest and well worth the closest study.

A categorical mention of artists or canvases savors too much of a finding list with notes to be of sufficient value to the reader to war-



MONTECITO

By William Wendt

rant the publishing. It may be said, therefore, in brief, that the most striking portraits in the exhibition were shown by John W. Alexander, Carroll Beckwith, Walter Florian, Letitia B. Hart, Adelaide Cole Chase, Irving R. Wiles, Louis Loeb, Juliet B. Thompson, Frank W. Benson, Charles F. Naegle, William M. Paxton, Zelma Baylos, and George Burroughs Torrey; that the landscapists made a good showing, Murphy, Bruce Crane, Lathrop, Van Lear, Charles Warren Eaton, J. Alden Weir, George D. Smillie, Emil Carlsen, Shurtleff, Bristol, Howard Butler, Groll, Melville Dewey, Charles Miller, W. Merritt Post, Loyal Field, and a newcomer in this field, Elliott Daingerfield, all being well represented; that the veteran W. T. Richards led the marine-painters, and J. C. Nicholl, Henry

B. Snell, I. B. Josephi, J. G. Tyler, and F. K. M. Rehn were all well exemplified, while of the figure men perhaps Charles C. Curran, W. Verplanck Birney, Walter Satterlee, Luis Mora, and Charles Schreyvogel led their fellows; that the sculptors made only a scanty showing, but that the works displayed were good in quality, especially J. Scott Hartley's portrait busts of William T. Evans, Colonel George Miller, and Otis Skinner as Shylock, Phinister Proctor's bas-relief, the "Moose family," and C. H. Niehaus's symbolic equestrian figure of St. Louis.

This brief enumeration of names is made without in any sense reflecting on the rank and file of the contributors.

Of the three hundred and eighty-three canvases shown, many naturally were characterized by superior qualities in composition, draftsmanship, and coloring; and many were hung by courtesy, as is always the case in these "news-exhibitions." The tastes of the



THE MOUNTAIN BREEZE  
By C. C. Curran



STILL COURTING

By J. G. Brown

American picture-buyer were reflected from the walls—landscapes and portraits predominated. Of marines, as compared with former years, there was a paucity, and of pictures of the *genre* type scarce a showing. Of no class was there a canvas whose merits fixed on it the attention of a discerning public; indeed, the standard of excellence could scarcely be called high, and yet on the whole the show was good.

Interest, as might be expected, centered on the prize-winners, and there was scant reason for questioning the judgment of the jury of awards. The Inness gold medal—a much-coveted honor—was won by the landscapist Edward Gay, for his "In the South Wind," a large and characteristic picture of a wheat-field, with the yellow grain bending before a warm, strong blast. This prize award was generally approved, and the artist received sincere and deserved congratulations. The Proctor prize of two hundred dollars, for the best portrait shown, went to Thomas Eakins, of Philadelphia, for his full-length standing portrait of Professor Leslie R. Miller, a strong work, full of Eakins's well-known qualities. Childe Hassam won the Thomas B. Clarke prize of three hundred dollars, for the best figure work shown, with "Lorelei," containing all the artist's character-



istics. The three Hallgarten prizes, for the three best oils, were won respectively by F. Luis Mora, with "The Letter," a delightful composition with two maidens in colonial costume; Gustav Wiegand, with a delicate tonal landscape, "Early Spring Moonrise"; and M. Petersen, with an interior with figures, "Curiosity Seekers," well composed and animated.

Being an institutional exhibition, the list of contributors this year was practically identical with that of former years. The one element of innovation in the show was the work of a score of Western artists who were invited to send canvases, and this can in no sense be said to have added a distinctive note to the exhibition. The importance of the innovation was the evidence of a broader and more liberal spirit on the part of the academicians. The day has gone by when the members of this time-honored body are jealous of precedent or tradition, and content to be ruled by a spirit of exclusiveness in their displays, and the presence of new work in the galleries—or new names in the catalogue, which is essentially a different matter—is a hopeful and salutary sign. The novelty of their appearance, perhaps, if for no other reason, warrants a special mention of the newcomers.

Henry Salem Hubbel, of Chicago, showed "The Long Seam"



SUMMER AFTERNOON  
By W. S. Robinson

and "Day Dreams," and Mathias Alten, of Grand Rapids, "In the Gravel Pit." while Frederick Freer, of Chicago, exhibited a portrait and a small seated figure with green-shaded lamp, called "The Medalist." J. Ottis Adams, of Indianapolis, contributed happy



THE LETTER  
By F. Luis Mora

effects in "Reflections of an Old Mill," and in "Mending the Nets, Chioggia," the view of a bridge in the little lagoon town near Venice. Oliver Dennett Grover, of Chicago, had a green sky, mottled with white cloudlets. "Silver Sunlight," by L. H. Meakin, and "Evening Over the Sea," by John C. Johansen, of Chicago; "Spring," by



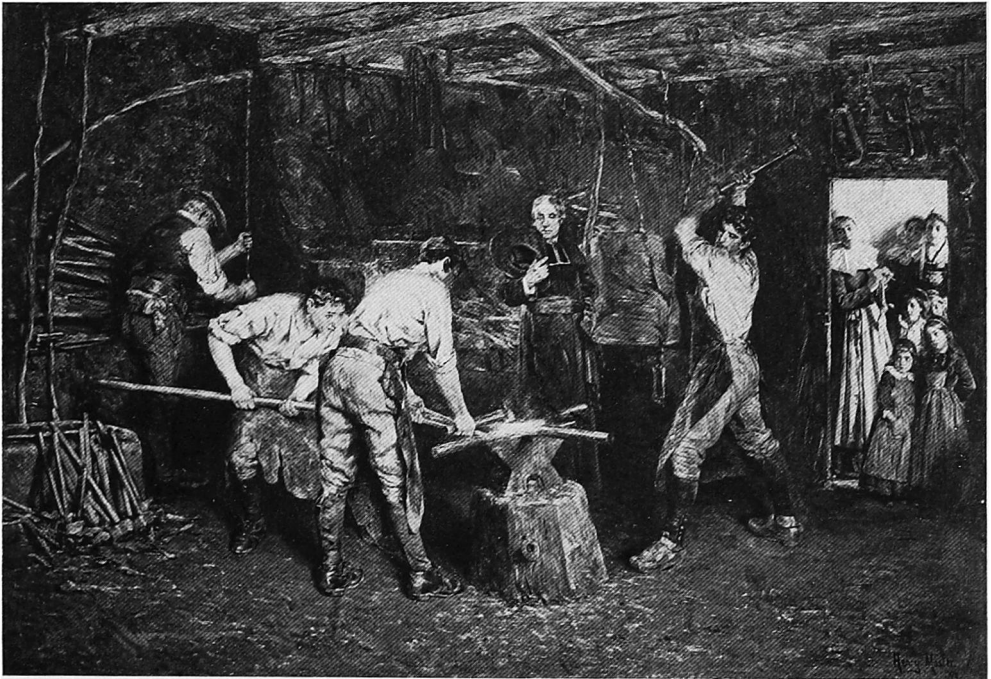
Charles Francis Browne, and "Feeding the Cows," by Eugenie F. Glaman, of the same city, were canvases that deserve a kindly word. "Decoration," by Frederick L. Stoddard, of St. Louis, was a work, as was pointed out during the exhibition, that arrested attention, a landscape carried out, not for a transcript from nature, but for a bit of decoration to architecture, like a tapestry. There was a touch of the same intention in "Montecito," by William Wendt, of Chicago, which was a classical landscape painted in broad, simple tones—ranks of planted trees to the right, hills in the background streaked with layers of evening mist, balance of trees and copses to the left. "The River," by Frank Oakes Sylvester, of St. Louis, took a bronze medal at the late World's Fair, and merited it. "The Winding River," by Edmund H. Wuerpel, of St. Louis, and "Trelyon Moors," by George Gardner Symons, of Chicago, scarcely need comment. Among the figure pictures were "Dutch Interior," by Walter M. Clute, and "Preparing for the Fête," by Paulina Donn Rudolph, of Chicago, the latter having frequently been exhibited. R. Lorenz, of Milwaukee, had a moonlit landscape with horses, called "Homeward Bound." In these pictures one could see nothing distinctive which could be pointed out as Western or Southern or local in any way, not even a touch of novelty, such as Rollo Peters incorporates in his pictures of the Pacific Slope. If the Academy sought by inviting Western artists to introduce something unusual into its galleries, its enterprise was abortive. The invitation to the Western artists is more properly to be regarded as a witness of generosity and good feeling.

A noteworthy feature of the exhibition—and one that in a sense differentiated it from our other great annual picture shows—was the utter absence of evidence of any special trend in artistic effort. No school was dominant. On the contrary, every room bore witness to different tastes, influences, ideals, types, interests. The older men who hark back to styles and methods not now in vogue, hung side by side with younger aspirants, who reach out after new methods, seek to introduce new fashions, and are swayed by fleeting influences. A local reviewer referred to this characteristic in words worth quoting. Said he:

"If a Morellian of the twenty-first century could be evoked from the limbo of the unborn and set down in the eightieth annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design, what a happy hunting-ground he would find! One may imagine his learned explanation of the perplexing diversity of styles. In Mr. Smillie, J. G. Brown, Thomas Moran, Mr. Henry, and possibly William T. Richards, he would discover the remnants of an aboriginal (!) American school abruptly ended by foreign invasions. Mr. Murphy, Bruce Crane, Leonard Ochtman, would be evidence of a pastoral school of French extraction. Mr. Eakins, Mr. Glackens, and Jerome Myers



ATTACK AT DAWN. By Charles Schreyvogel



FORGING THE CROSS. By Henry Mosler

would in their degree constitute a realist group of anarchical tendency, while there would be also a much larger body of, our connoisseurs might say, pigmentarians, with William Chase at their head. Evidences of a minor cult of sun-worshippers would be afforded by Alden Weir and Childe Hassam, while everywhere would be traces



THE SISTERS  
By William Paxton

of a devout body of shadow-worshippers, led by John W. Alexander. Finally, our twenty-first-century amateur would find baffling traces of personal influences. Mr. Wendt's spacious 'Montecito' would prove that Segantini had sojourned in America, while Mr. Genth's 'The Passing of Summer' would demand a similar hypothesis as to Gaston La Touche. In fine, our supposititious Morellian would never for a moment imagine that he was studying pictures, all of which were painted in or about the year of grace, 1904; he would rather conclude that in the collection of some eclectic connoisseur he had

come upon the fragments of the art of several races and generations of men. . . .

"This apparent absence of tendency is due largely to the bankruptcy of all the formulas. Who to-day is brave enough to stand on the 'broad stroke,' the color dot, or plane; *plein-airisme*, or any other ism? And is not the rather striking diversity of the walls at the Fifty-seventh Street Building due also to the absence of pictures painted expressly for exhibition? Thus nothing in the show really deserves the title of a "machine" except Mr. Creifield's deathbed scene "Between the Lights," which, as luck would have it, hangs in the morgue-like East Gallery, from which Mr. Hamilton's merciless maidens singing their Spring Song already warn off the discerning visitor. This absence of exhibition pieces makes the whole show much less representative of current tendencies than similar collections abroad—less sophisticated in a way, certainly less infected with vulgarity, but also weaker in quality. It generally seems the work of painters of low vitality and small productive power, whereas a Salon or even a Royal Academy gives at least the impression of great physical vigor and joyous fecundity."

There is much of truth in these quoted words, but the genesis of styles, the sources of influence, the absence of cohesion and unity of aim and aspiration pointed out is no reflection on the academicians and their invited contributors. It is true that the lack of specially prepared canvases tended to minimize interest by eliminating the spectacular and sensational; but on the other hand, the fact that the pictures were selected from the every-day studio work of the contributors offered the public a better index of the average of daily achievement than a more pretentious but less honest Salon would have done. A striking work that arrests attention is not necessarily great art; nor is an unassuming canvas that commands curt notice—perhaps savoring of other days and other lands—necessarily bad art. It is not less a matter of taste than of principle. Mr. Hassam, from his standpoint, may be justified in denominating the work of some of his confrères "Christmas Cards"; and Mr. Moran from his, in dubbing impressionism a "symbol of ignorance." Be that as it may, as many whims as principles become crystallized into habit, and limitations as well as supreme abilities work out their own *métier*. The good, better, and best of art are not so easily determined or defined.

For the rest, painters always have reached out and always will reach out after novelties of subject, treatment, or technique, upon which they may put their personal stamp; they always have yielded and always will yield to the magical influence of some master or favorite. Fashions come and go, and taste is largely a matter of flux. The devotees of the early schools had their day—perhaps will soon have it again. The followers of foreign vogues and advanced

theories step to the front—perhaps soon to retire. An exhibition like that of the National Academy of Design is thus a curious commentary on the accelerating and retarding forces that determine the vibrations of the pendulum. The older men represented in the galleries are confident that the pendulum is sure to swing their way some day, and hence do not care to change—if they could—their wonted methods. Those of impressionistic tendencies are sure that they will have their inning shortly, and so they keep devotedly at their task. And so with the sun-worshippers, and the shade-worshippers, and the pastoralists of French extraction, and the anarchical realists, and the followers of this, that, and the other fashion-leader in pictorial art. We had them all in the galleries, and will have them again next year. It is just as well—both for the men and for American art—that we should. The old dictum, “Ring out the old, ring in the new,” is a doubtful policy, for the old of to-day was the new of yesterday, and the new of to-day will be the old of to-morrow, and one cannot tell how soon the order of things may be reversed and fashion may resurrect old methods, fashions, cults, with new trimmings to disguise their antiquity, and give them a further lien of public favor.

W. T. LANDERS.



## THE RIGHTS OF THE ART CRITIC

Holding that criticisms of art are privileged, and that a critic has the right to apprise the public of the value of an artist's production, Judge Halsey recently sustained the demurrer of the defendants in the case of Paul J. Kupper against John Montague Handley and the Milwaukee Sentinel. The court decided that Mr. Handley's criticism of the model for the Kosciusko monument, executed by the plaintiff, were not of a libelous nature, for the reason that the charges were against a thing instead of a person. Though the sculptor's name was used in connection with the criticism of his model, the court holds that the denunciation was of the work rather than of the artist or his ability. The words, alleged in the complaint to constitute a libel, it is held, were used in the criticism of the statue. The court also takes the stand that inasmuch as the model was on public exhibition, it was subject to criticism.

